

Dear Senator and Honorable Members of the Children's Committee,

I am Edward A. Dimmick; I am a licensed Connecticut veterinarian. I am writing to support HB 6329, AAC Dissection Choice. Students should be given the chance to opt out of dissection and perform an alternative assignment.

As a veterinarian, I recognize that dissection is a necessary aspect of education for any veterinary school. However, grade school and high school students are not in the same situation. Most notably, veterinary education is a voluntary option of specialized training; local primary and secondary education are generalized and compulsory. For many students the required level of detail, and intended application of the information obtained, are not sufficient justification for the large amount of class time consumed by dissection. In addition, some students have ethical and/or aesthetic objections which detract from, rather than add to, the value of this method of teaching.

It is my considered opinion that other options would not be of lesser educational value to the student. As a high school student I did several dissections as part of the Biology coursework; and I see no reason to conclude that the learning derived was significantly different from, and certainly not superior to, what could be achieved through the use of texts, models, computer simulations, and other alternatives.

Nor should the offer of such options adversely impact the school system. If anything most alternatives are less expensive, a significant concern in times of ever-tightening education budgets.

This would not be a unique proposition. A number of other states have enacted laws or policies to allow students to opt out of dissection. It would be useful to examine their experiences with the implementation and effectiveness of such measures.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

**Edward A. Dimmick
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